

What Is Claimed Is:

[c1]

1. A system for providing a network service to users, comprising:
a first data center for providing the network service at a first geographic location, including:
 first active resources configured for active use;
 first standby resources configured for standby use in the event that active resources cannot be obtained from another source;
 first logic for managing access to resources;
a second data center for providing the network service at a second geographic location, including:
 second active resources configured for active use;
 second standby resources configured for standby use in the event that active resources cannot be obtained from another source;
 second logic for managing access to resources;
wherein the first active resources include the same resources as the second standby resources, and wherein the first standby resources include the same resources as the second active resources,
and wherein, the first logic is configured to: assess a needed resource for use by a user coupled to the first data center; determine whether the needed resource is contained within the first active resources or the first standby resources of the first data center; provide the needed resource from the first active resources if the needed resource is contained therein; provide the needed resource from the second active resources of the second data center if the needed resource is contained within the standby resources of the first data center; and
wherein, the second logic is configured to: assess a needed resource for use by a user coupled to the second data center; determine whether the needed resource is contained with the second active resources or the second standby resources of the second data center; provide the needed resource from the second active resources if the needed resource is contained therein; and provide the needed resource from the first active resources of the first data center if the needed resource is contained within the second standby

resources of the second data center.

- [c2] 2. The system of claim 1, wherein:
the first logic is further configured to: assess whether the first active resources have become disabled; and, in response thereto, route a request for a needed resource to the second data center, and
the second logic is further configured to: assess whether the second active resources have become disabled; and, in response thereto, route a request for a needed resource to the first data center.
- [c3] 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the system further includes a distributor module for distributing a user's request for network services to at least the first or second data centers.
- [c4] 4. The system of claim 3, wherein the distributor module further includes:
logic for receiving information regarding a failure of the first data center, and for transferring subsequent requests for resources to the second data center, and
logic for receiving information regarding a failure of the second data center, and for transferring subsequent requests for resources to the first data center.
- [c5] 5. The system of claim 1, wherein:
the first data center includes:
a first database;
a first network access tier including logic for managing a user's access to the first data center;
a first application tier including application logic for administering the network service; and
a first data access tier for managing access to the first database;
the second data center includes;
a second database;
a second network access tier including logic for managing a user's access to the second data center;

a second application tier including application logic for administering the network service; and
a second database tier including logic for managing access to the second database.

- [c6] 6. The system of claim 1, wherein:
the first active resources and the first standby resources comprise first database content maintained in a first database; and
wherein the second active resources and the second standby resources comprise second database content maintained in a second database.
- [c7] 7. The system of claim 6, wherein:
the first logic maintains instances corresponding to the first database content, wherein the states of the instances define whether the resources in the first database form part of the first active resources or the first standby resources.
- [c8] the second logic maintains instances corresponding to the second database content, wherein the states of the instances define whether the resources in the second database form part of the second active resources or the second standby resources.
- [c9] 8. The system of claim 1, wherein a wide area network couples at least one user to the first data center or the second data center.
- [c10] 9. The system of claim 1, wherein the system further includes an inter-center routing network that couples the first and second data centers.
- [c11] 10. The system of claim 9, wherein:
the first logic is configured to route requests to the second active resources of the second data center via the inter-center routing network, and
the second logic is configured to route requests to the first active resources of the first data center via the inter-center routing network.
- [c12] 11. A method system for providing a network service to users, comprising:

in a system including first and second data centers located and first and second geographic locations, respectively, coupling a user to the first data center, wherein:

the first data center includes first active resources configured for active use; and first standby resources configured for standby use in the event that active resources cannot be obtained from another source;

the second data center includes second active resources configured for active use; and second standby resources configured for standby use in the event that active resources cannot be obtained from another source;

assessing a resource needed by the user, defining a needed resource;

determining whether the needed resource is contained with the first active resources or the first standby resources of the first data center;

providing the needed resource from the first active resources if the needed resource is contained therein; and

providing the needed resource from the second active resources of the second data center if the needed resource is contained within the standby resources of the first data center,

wherein the first active resources include the same resources as the second standby resources, and wherein the first standby resources include the same resources as the second active resources.

[c13] 12. The method of claim 11, further including the steps of:
assessing whether the first active resources have become disabled; and
in response thereto, routing a request for a needed resource to the second data center.

[c14] 13. The method of claim 11, further including the steps of:
receiving information regarding a failure of the first data center; and
in response thereto, transferring subsequent requests for resources to the second data center.

- [c15] 14. The method of claim 11, wherein:
the first active resources and the first standby resources comprise first database content maintained in a first database; and
the second active resources and the second standby resources comprise second database content maintained in a second database.
- [c16] 15. The method of claim 14, wherein:
the first data center maintains instances corresponding to the first database content, wherein the states of the instances define whether the resources in the first database form part of the first active resources or the first standby resources; and
the second data center maintains instances corresponding to the second database content, wherein the states of the instances define whether the resources in the second database form part of the second active resources or the second standby resources.
- [c17] 16. The method of claim 11, wherein a wide area network couples at least one user to the first data center or the second data center.
- [c18] 17. The method of claim 11, wherein an inter-center routing network couples the first and second data centers.
- [c19] 18. The method of claim 17, wherein:
the first data center routes a request for a needed resource in the second active resources via the inter-center routing network, and
the second data center routes a request for a needed resource in the first active resources via the inter-center routing network.
- [c20] 19. A system for providing a network service to users via a wide area network, comprising:
a first data center for providing the network service at a first geographic location, including:
a first data storage containing a first database;
a first network access tier including logic for managing a user's access

to the first data center;

a first application tier including application logic for administering the network service; and

a first database tier including logic for managing access to the first database;

wherein the first database includes:

first active data resources configured for active use;

first standby data resources configured for standby use in the event that the needed resources cannot be obtained from another source;

a second data center for providing the network service at a second geographic location, including:

a second data storage including a second database;

a second network access tier including logic for managing a user's access to the second data center;

a second application tier including application logic for administering the network service; and

a second database tier including logic for managing access to the second database;

wherein the second database includes:

second active data resources configured for active use;

second standby data resources configured for standby use in the event that the needed resources cannot be obtained from another source;

wherein the first active resources include the same resources as the second standby resources, and wherein the first standby resources include the same resources as the second active resources,

and wherein, the first data center is configured to: assess a needed resource for use by a user coupled to the first data center; determine whether the needed resource is contained within the first active resources or the first standby resources of the first data center; provide the needed resource from the first active resources if the needed resource is contained therein; provide

the needed resource from the second active resources of the second data center if the needed resource is contained within the standby resources of the first data center;

and wherein, the second data center is configured to: assess a needed resource for use by a user coupled to the second data center; determine whether the needed resource is contained with the second active resources or the second standby resources of the second data center; provide the needed resource from the second active resources if the needed resource is contained therein; and provide the needed resource from the first active resources of the first data center if the needed resource is contained within the standby resources of the second data center.

[c21]

20. The system of claim 19, wherein:

the first data center is further configured to: assess whether the first active resources have become disabled; and, in response thereto, route a request for a needed resource to the second data center, and

the second data center is further configured to: assess whether the second active resources have become disabled; and, in response thereto, route a request for a need resource to the first data center.

[c22]

21. The system of claim 19, wherein the system further includes an inter-center routing network that couples the first and second data centers.

[c23]

22. A method for providing a network service to users via a wide area network, comprising:

in a system including first and second data centers located and first and second geographic locations, respectively, coupling a user to the first data center, wherein:

the first data center includes: first active resources configured for active use; and first standby resources configured for standby use in the event active resources cannot be obtained from another source;

the second data center includes: second active resources configured for active use; and second standby resources configured for standby

use in the event active resources cannot be obtained from another source;

assessing a resource needed by the user, defining a needed resource;
determine whether the needed resource is contained with the first active resources or the first standby resources of the first data center;
providing the needed resource from the first active resources if the needed resource is contained therein;
performing steps (a) and (b) if the needed resource is contained in the first standby resources:

(a) routing a request for the needed resource to the second data center via an inter-center network;

(b) providing the needed resource from the second active resources of the second data center;

wherein the first active resources include the same resources as the second standby resources, and wherein the first standby resources include the same resources as the second active resources.

[c24]

23. The method of claim 22, further including the steps of:

assessing whether the first active resources have become disabled; and
in response thereto, routing a request for a needed resource to the second data center.